

HAMILTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA
(317) 776-8500

REHABILITATION OF BUILDINGS, FURNACES, FURNITURE, RUGS AND CLOTHING

Buildings Subjected to Floods:

Buildings, which have been flooded, should be examined carefully before being used for living quarters to make sure that they are safe and will not collapse. Loose plaster should be removed from the walls and ceilings so that it will not fall on occupants later. The doors and window sashes, which have been swollen, should be removed and allowed to dry thoroughly.

If water remains in the basement, it should be drained or pumped out as soon as possible. As the water is being removed, the mud should be stirred and carried away with it. After the basement has been allowed to dry thoroughly, the floors and walls should be washed down with a solution of one pound of chloride of lime to six gallons of water or with a solution prepared from a commercial laundry bleach containing chlorine. The laundry bleaches, such as Clorox, Shur Fine, Snowy, Purex, Scot Lad, and many others having 5.25% sodium hypochlorite, are good for the purpose. For use in basements as mentioned above, add one part of liquid chlorine laundry bleach to nine parts of water. Keep windows open for ventilation. Chlorine solutions are corrosive and should be mixed in plastic containers, enamel-lined metal pails or pans, or stoneware crocks. Do not apply solution to metal surfaces. Follow precaution printed on the chlorine container.

Walls, Woodwork and Floors:

The walls and woodwork, while still damp, should be thoroughly scrubbed with a stiff fiber brush and water to remove all mud and silt. Particular attention should be given to all corners, cracks, and crevices, which should receive especially careful scrubbing. Floors should be cleaned of all mud and dirt and allowed to dry thoroughly. Some artificial heat may be used with caution. The temperature should not get high enough to cause steam (vapor) to rise from the floor and cause buckling or warping.

Redecorating should not be attempted for some time as it is useless to try to paint damp surfaces and it may be found that three or four months' drying time is required before the decorating can be done satisfactorily.

Furnaces:

All parts of the heating system that have been exposed to water should be thoroughly cleaned and dried. The smoke pipe and chimney should be inspected and cleaned, if necessary, and furnace doors or covers left open to ventilate the system. Burners should be removed if possible; cleaned, and allowed to dry to prevent rust and clogging of orifices.

Furniture, Books, Etc.:

Furniture should be removed to the sunshine and fresh air and all the drawer-slides and other working parts stacked separately. All of the mud and silt should then be removed. Care should be exercised to remove the furniture from the direct rays of the sun before it is subject to warping. Stoves and other metal fixtures should first have all the mud and silt removed. They should then be wiped with an oiled rag, then polished or painted. Books should be allowed to dry carefully and slowly with alternate exposing to air and pressing. Toward the end of this treatment, the books may be subjected to small amounts of artificial heat.

Rugs and Carpets:

Rugs and carpets should be stretched out on a flat surface and allowed to dry thoroughly with alternate turning to prevent molding, then subjected to beating, sweeping or vacuum cleaning. Those rugs that require shampooing should be washed with commercial rug shampoo products or with a soap jelly, and then wiped off, rinsed with clean water, and allowed to dry thoroughly. Soap jelly may be prepared by mixing one pint of mild soap powder or flakes with five parts of hot water and beating with an eggbeater until a stiff lather is formed. Resizing should be done with a commercial or homemade material when necessary. Sizing may be prepared by the use of one-half pound of granulated glue to one gallon of boiling water. Stretch the rug out flat where it will not be disturbed, apply the sizing with a wide brush and allow to dry thoroughly. When practical, upholstery may be cleaned by following the procedures as outlined for rugs.

Clothing and Bedding:

Flood-soiled clothing and bedding require considerable care to obtain satisfactory results. All loose dirt should be brushed off, followed by laundering or dry cleaning in the usual manner.

Lightweight comforters may be laundered in the same manner as blankets. Heavy comforters should be taken apart to be cleaned. Mattresses and pillows that are badly soiled may not be fit to reclaim; however, those of good quality may be reconditioned by the owner or by companies specializing in this work.